

existence of slavery, would have caused even an attempt at secession? On the question of the tariff you could not have had a united North or South. They differed in every portion of the South as in the North upon that question; and if they had seceded the sword would have been flashing upon every door step; for we know from the passions of human nature and the history of the past, that civil war always develops resistance in every household, unless there is some extraordinary fact which counteracts this result.

But the institution of slavery rendered the Southern Union man powerless to resist this rebellion. Gentlemen talk about what Maryland might have done, or what any State might have done. If the men of Maryland opposed to secession, could not keep the South back by the reasoning process, it could not have been done. Virginia could not have done it; because they had this broad fact to stand upon to bring this conflict within their own power. All they had to do was to fire the cannon, blow the trumpet, and the common magnetic touch of this common institution brought around their standard not only their friends but their enemies. The politicians of the South knew this. They knew that however opposed Virginia might be to revolution and secession, the very moment they brought it to a conflict of arms, Virginia would be forced to support them. Why? Because they were their countrymen? They were no more their countrymen than the countrymen of the North. Because they belonged to the same State? No. It was because they belonged to the slaveholding States, and this institution was a part of something they prided themselves upon. It was because in their education they had been taught to believe that they, both secessionists and Union men, were superior to the mass of the people of the country. It was this one fact that brought them to this one standard, when no other fact or opinion could have reconciled them to it.

This is a matter which gentlemen upon the other side will not understand probably as thoroughly as we. I have never ceased to realize it. The Union men of the State have come fully to realize it. It has long been found that men who did not hold to the State rights theory, when they have come within the boundaries of the State of Virginia, have recognized it. And even in Baltimore, trembling under the despotic control of military despotism, unable to express their true sentiments, as gentlemen say, men deliberately asserted and expressed the views of the ultra Southern rights party of this State. What were those views? That the institution of slavery had developed a chivalry, and a higher class of people in Maryland, a superior caste in this State, and that the men who opposed it were the trading and laboring classes. That we had two classes, like the

Norman aristocracy and the Saxon peasantry, in a large portion of the country; and the former regarded their position as better than to have prosperous towns; they looked upon their aristocratic hospitality as better than the industry, progress, and the development of high moral principles in the Northern society. And they directly asserted that though Northern men should make Maryland a blackened ruin, they would take it a blackened ruin into the Southern Confederacy after they had driven the Northern barbarians out.

I do not attribute these sentiments to any member of this Convention. I have no right to do that. But I say that whatever their sentiments may be, these are the sentiments of a large portion of the people who supported and voted for them; and who, if they had not voted for them, would have voted for some other gentlemen representing very different views from those expressed by my colleagues and myself upon this floor. I made up my mind at that time, however much it might gratify me to be able to provide for those around me, interested in the institution, by contributions from my own pocket, or by State compensation—I made up my mind, and I express it now without fear or favor, that it was necessary for the safety of a portion of the people of this State, that the institution of slavery should die. And so far as my own constituents are concerned, they adopt the same view and accept the issue, and I proclaim it as the deliberate opinion and purpose of the constituency whom I represent, that the institution of slavery is dangerous to their liberty, their happiness, their prosperity, their safety, and so far as they can wield the instrument of death, it shall die.

What is the alternative to which we are driven in this State. The fact is certain, whether the institution of slavery is dead or not, that it exists in the Constitution of this State now. No other system ever stood so protected by the Constitution. This State to-day is neither a free State nor a slave State, but both at the same time. It is a peculiar position. We must array ourselves upon one side or the other. We must either abolish slavery, or we must go to work and by a reactionary process build slavery up. No State can exist with an institution like this in the condition it is in now. It does not cultivate the land, and it keeps other labor from doing it. It does not maintain itself in the position where it was a few years ago, but it keeps out free labor.

Is any man so insane as to think that it is possible to bring back to this State the fugitives that have left it? that the grand train of colored people whom the soldiers have swept away with their armies, with their minds penetrated by new ideas of liberty, can be brought back, and the institution of slavery can become what it was ten years